

THE HOLY GHOST OR THE PARACLETE

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“**H**OLY Ghost” is the same as “Holy Spirit”. It is the Third Person of the Trinity, the First Person being God, the Second being the Son. The function of the Holy Ghost is to be the Paraclete, or Advocate. Let us trace the several ideas intended to be conveyed by the Third Person in the development of Christianity; and then compare them with parallel ideas in other religions.

In the Old Testament, we have in *Genesis*, i, 2, the Spirit of God, or Spirit of Jehovah, “moving upon the face of the waters”. This may mean God’s Spirit Itself, or the Spirit in God. Whichever it be, it is the active Divine Principle in nature. This meaning is strengthened by *Psalms*, civ, 30: “Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created.”

In I. *Samuel*, xvi, 13, we read that Samuel anointed David, and “the spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David from that day forward”. This shows that the Spirit is the power by which higher energies of the human soul are aroused; and in *Isaiah*, lxi, 1, we read “the spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek,” showing that the energy, or one of the soul’s energies, so roused is the prophetic faculty.

Now referring to *Joel*, ii, 28 ff., we read :

And it shall come to pass afterwards, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh ; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions.

And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.

This shows that the Prophets looked forward to a Messianic age as the special time for the full manifestation of the Spirit. This you will find repeated in the *Acts of the Apostles*, ii, 17-18.

In *Acts*, ii, 1-4, we learn that it was the Feast Day of Pentecost.

And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. . . . And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

And in *Acts*, x, 44 : " While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word." This shows that the early Christians saw a personal Spirit dowering them with extraordinary gifts.

Coming to *Romans*, viii, 11, ff., we find S. Paul saying :

But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

This shows that to S. Paul, the Holy Ghost is the principle of the Divine Life in the community.

Next, in *Galatians*, v, 22-23, we find the Holy Ghost as the Generator of all spiritual graces--thus :

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, temperance.

The Spirit's, or Ghost's, proper personality is first clearly implied in *Matthew*.

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

In *John*, xiv, 16, Christ says :

And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever.

In *John*, xiv, 20, Christ says :

At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.

In *John*, xiv, 26, He says :

But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

And Paul in II. *Corinthians*, xiii, 14, apostrophises with the benediction :

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.

Considering all the several ideas in these passages conveyed by the expression "Holy Ghost," it will be easy to understand how the two great divisions in Christianity, *viz.*, Trinitarian and Unitarian arose. The Unitarian doctrine which is the doctrine of the undivided unity of the Divine Nature, is also the distinguishing doctrine of the Old Testament. As to Christ, the Unitarians hold two views: One that He is an emanation from the Supreme; the second called the humanitarian view, namely, a mere man made Lord and Christ by His resurrection from the dead. The present tendency generally of the Unitarians is towards a simple theism with Jesus Christ as its Chief Prophet. (Put Muhammad in lieu of Jesus and

you have Muhammad-anism). This is the reason why Unitarianism is more congenial to the tenets of Brāhmanism, which, however, is a theism bereft of all the traditional trappings constituting what is called Hindūism.

The Trinitarians affirm a Deity but as having a threefold Personality, Father, Son and Holy Ghost; or the One God in three aspects, mainly based on the passages of the New Testament. The Trinity is also distinguished as essential and economical; the essential with reference to the inner metaphysical relations of the Three Persons, and the economical with reference to the redemptive activities of Deity.

Whether the Holy Ghost proceeded from the Father alone, or from the Father and the Son, was a matter which separated the Greek and the Roman Churches. However, *filioque*, "and from the Son," was a phrase added by the western Church, the Roman, in the sixth century A.D.

Here it is apropos to state the Roman or Latin idea of God as a Power outside of the course of nature, or extra-cosmic, occasionally interfering with it; and to state the Greek idea of God as the Power working in and through nature, without interference or infraction of law, or intra-cosmic. Now in the idea of the Holy Spirit, or Holy Ghost, viewed progressively (as above) from the Old to the New Testament, it will be observed that the idea of God in both these aspects is evidenced in various forms; and the one solid Truth is made manifest, *viz.*, the continuous approach of God and man, not a mere physical or metaphysical approach, but a moral *rapprochement*. Rationalistic writers endeavoured to reduce the Holy Ghost to no more than the moral

faculty in man—*buḍḍhi*. But what, after all, it can mean we shall now examine in the light of eastern Scriptures, or the *Veḍānta*.

The *Veḍāntic* conception of God is that He is both outside nature, and inside it, and *a posteriori* in man; hence it is a union of the partial conceptions characterising the Latin and the Greek Churches as shown above. Whether the Spirit of God moving over the face of the waters, indicates supra-natural God, or the active Divine Principle in nature, the fact is clear, that the breath breathed from outside came to dwell in the inside. If the “breathing” of *Genesis* indicates the first beginnings of the motions of a soul, by the time that Christ is reported to have said in *John* that the Holy Ghost, or Comforter, should abide in the community after His passing away, and that Paul said his benediction in II. *Corinthians*, the soul had shown great progress in the evolution of the divine nature; in other words, God, latent at the stage of the first “breathing,” had gone far in manifestation in man by the time of Jesus Christ and the Apostles. Evolution of soul *pari passu* with the manifestation of God has never ceased, but has been going on in the body of the Church. So it may be reasoned.

Christ is the Son of God, and also the Bride of God—both being figurative expressions. Whether Son or Bride, it simply indicates the several kinds of kinship the soul holds to God, as the child of God or the heir of God. Be it Son or Bride, it ever dwells in the bosom of God. Hence *John*, i, 18 :

No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

And Christ is one with the Father, according to *John*, x, 30: "I and my Father are one." "Son," "Bride," "in the bosom of God," "in my Father," "I and my Father are one," are all expressions to show the divine nature of the soul, and its most intimate, inextricable, loving relation to Deity. In this way we may understand Dante's lines in the *Purgatorio*, xx:

What I was saying of that only bride,
Of the Holy Ghost and which occasioned thee
To turn towards me for some commentary.

In the Bible itself, the story in *Matthew*, 25, of "the virgins going forth to meet the Bride," and *Revelations*, xxii, 17, "the Spirit and the Bride say, Come," are quite significant in this connection. In *The Song of Solomon*, the Church in turn, in which the Holy Ghost abides, is the Bride of Christ.

Both Christ and the Holy Ghost represent the Grace of God operating on the soul in different manners—Grace as Christ is Grace made manifest in flesh, and Grace as Holy Ghost is Grace invisibly operating on the soul both from outside and inside, but more abidingly and abundantly inside. Of Christ it is written in *Matthew*, i, 18, that Mary "was found with child of the Holy Ghost," and i, 20, that "that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost". From this it may be conceived that the same principle of Grace, invisible as Holy Ghost, becomes visible as Christ. Consulting the Evangelist John, he tells us in i, 14, that what became flesh was the Word. Hence both Christ and the Holy Ghost are intimately referent to the Principle, or Word, which eternally abides with God. Hence John is found stating in i, 2-3:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God.

Here we come to Plato's eternal ideas, and the eternal Word, the Veda. The Word, or the Veda, never dies. It becomes dormant at one time and is revived at another time according to the passage :

Inspired men obtained the Word by their austerities from the Self-Existent—the Word that was hidden.

Hence the Word externally abides in God; its meaning, guiding souls, is the Holy Ghost; and its becoming flesh is the great fact of Incarnation—the Christ.

The primeval surface of the idea "Ghost" is literally found in the Vedic passage : "The *R̥gveda*, or the Holy Word, is but the breathing of this Great Ghost (*bhūta*)." Firstly, there is no word without the breath; and secondly, breath and spirit are closely allied in human thought. The first meaning is therefore expressed in such passages of the Upaniṣats as : "Ṛk indeed is Speech (Word), Sāman is Breath; the union is the Holy Word Aum (Om)—the *Udgītha*," or the song of the soul going out in prayer to its Father.

As to the origin of the word Christ, it is traceable to *Shrī* of the Vedas. The Hebrew Word, Messiah, means the Anointed. Christ is a translation of that Word. In the early years of the Church, Christians were often referred to as Chrestians. In Greek, *Christos* means excellent, and is cognate with the Samskr̥t, *Shreṣṭha*, which is derivable from *Shrī*. Also if the component of the word Eucharist, *viz.*, the Greek, *Charis*, be considered, it means Grace.

It is therefore possible *Charis* is philologically connected with *Chrest*, Christ, *Shreṣṭha*, *Shrī*, all meaning Grace. And that *Shrī*, or Christ, is the Bride of God, eternally dwelling in His bosom, is borne out by many passages of the Hindū Scriptures, of which one occurring in the famous *Puruṣha-Sūkṭa*, may be mentioned: "Hrī [material] and Lakṣhmī [spiritual] are Thy Brides." Lakṣhmī, very much akin to Logos is a synonym of *Shrī*, *Puruṣha* being *Nārāyaṇa* (see *Nārāyaṇīya*, *Shānti-parva*, *Mahābhārata*).

In the beginning of this paper, it was stated that the function of the Holy Ghost is to be the Paraclete, or Advocate; *i.e.*, the Mediator between the soul and God; in other words, the Saviour. As Christ is Mediator and Saviour, and the Holy Ghost is only the subtle form of Christ, *Shrī*, in Hindūism, is the Mediatrix. She is called the *Puruṣhakāra*, which almost sounds like Paraclete. In all probability they have a family connection, *i.e.*, philologically. It means the Interceder between the soul and God. It is Grace which prevails with the soul to turn it Godward, and prevails with God to pardon the soul and turn Him soulward. In the *Kenopanishat* (iii Khaṇḍa) a story is told how the celestials asked Agni and Vāyu, who were very proud, to discover God (*Yakṣha*). In their pride they attempted, but ignominiously failed. And they asked Indra, a yet higher deity among the minor Gods and he was humble. Seeing his humility the Holy Word, in the form of a Female, appeared before Indra, and interceded on his behalf with God. In a work called *Shrī-Vachana-Bhūṣhana*, by Bāla-Lokāchārya, translated for the Chicago Parliament of Religions (1893) by Pārthasārathi Yogī, at the Rev. Dr. W. Miller's instance, a

matchless discourse on the functions of the Paraclete is found. It would be therefore superfluous in this paper to enter largely into that subject. God and Grace are a united Principle. They are spoken of differently on account of the different attributes of the Deity manifesting or operating in different ways.

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(To be concluded)

A CHILD OF NATURE

The soft brown earth around me lies
 So sweet and clean,
 The fresh green grass all gently sighs
 To the breeze unseen.

The new-born elm-leaves dance in glee
 Like a thousand butterflies ;
 They are happy and pure in their liberty—
 Pure as the cloud-flecked skies.

For Nature's filled with purity
 Holy and fair ;
 Nought that doth own Her sovereignty
 Doth foulness wear.

I know nought sweeter than the earth,
 I know nought purer than the skies ;
 O let me take of Her new birth
 And be Her child, clean, fair and wise !

F. GORDON PEARCE